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ABSTRACT

An historical sketch of minimum competency testing programs and issues is presented. Among the state and local programs briefly described are: 1960, Denver Public Schools, CO; 1976, Richmond Public Schools, VA; 1977, Kern Union High School, CA; 1977, Berea High School, OH; 1977, Westside High School, NE; 1973, Oregon; 1975, California (High School Proficiency Examination); 1976, New York (Basic Competency Tests); 1976, Florida (Functional Literacy Test). To describe testing issues, excerpts from speeches or policy statements of these associations are included: National Assessment of Educational Progress, International Reading Association, National Education Association, National Academy of Education, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and Missouri State Teachers Association. It is concluded that testing should focus on diagnosis and remediation, beginning in elementary school but should not be required for grade promotion or high school graduation. (CP)

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Competency Testing--An Encounter With the Future

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
Seventh Plains Regional IRA Conference
(Minneapolis, Minnesota,
September 27-29, 1979)

by

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Competency testing has perhaps become the most controversial issue in the history of American education. The proliferation of the movement nationwide has been phenomenal. Educators and the public are divided on whether or not to require the passing of a minimum competency test as a requirement for issuing a high school diploma to a graduating senior.

Wendlandt in a parody on Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address" expressed his sentiments against competency testing in "The Competency Address:"

> Four score and more years ago our forebearers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in equality, and dedicated to the proposition that all are entitled to a free public education.
>
> Now we are engaged in a great debate, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of the war over minimum competencies. We have come to discuss the topic in hopes that the competency movement will not serve as a final resting place for those of us devoting our lives to education. Because of the impact testing may have, it is altogether fitting and proper that we should do so.
>
> But in a larger sense we cannot deliberate, we cannot equivocate, we cannot decide this matter. The state legislators, wise and otherwise, have mandated it far beyond our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it will be interested in what we do.[1]

The national push for competency testing has occurred since January 1, 1977 when only seven states had mandated it.[2] In June 1978 fourteen states had legislated minimum competencies as a graduation requirement. Seventeen other states

had mandated a form of competency testing.[3] Action was pending either in the legislature or boards of education of the remaining states.

As of January 1, 1979 thirty-four states had passed some type of legislation or regulation to adopt minimum competency testing.[4] Approximately two-thirds of these states require that tests be administered. A total of seventeen states currently use tests as a criterion for high school graduation.[5]

In May 1979 thirty-six states either had taken legislation or state board action to require or permit to identify basic or life skills needed by students.[6] Open for debate was the implementation procedure. This action has, by and large, been promoted by non-educators while educators opposed the idea.

In his foreward to a book on competency testing and high school graduation requirements, Keerman, Executive Secretary of ASCD stated that concern had been expressed by the teaching profession and the public regarding deficiencies of high school graduates.[7] Too many young people are leaving high school after graduation unable to compute well enough to be good consumers, or they cannot read adequately to follow job instructions and basic safety rules.

The schools of today are being viewed with skepticism by many Americans. The public is questioning the purpose of sending students to school for twelve or thirteen years only to graduate unable to read or work mathematics problems.[8]

Because of declining scores on tests the public has become concerned about setting more stringent standards on students to

obtain a high school diploma. Some of the concerns are as follows: scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) have fallen from a mean of 473 on verbal in 1965 to a mean of only 434 in 1975. In the same period the mathematics mean has dropped from 496 to 472.[9]

Competency testing is not a matter of depriving students from receiving a high school diploma, but a question of identifying and remediating deficiencies early in the student's high school studies. Nationwide competency testing addresses two concerns (1) assisting students with deficiencies, (2) insisting that the high school diploma regain significant meaning.[10]

Since there have been so many unfaverable nationwide reports on the deficiencies of high school graduates, school systems in many states are making an all out effort to see that the graduate can perform some basic skills. Competency testing seems to be the best answer or route to pursue.[11]

Denver public schools pioneered the way in 1960 with a program on competency testing in basic skills. In a report on the program given by Cavanaugh, he stated that 60,000 students had been tested since its inception.[12] The subjects covered in the test were reading, grammar, spelling, and mathematics. To pass the test a student was required to answer correctly thirty-two out of fifty items on each part. The test was given in October and April each year. If a student failed, he was given remediation before re-taking the test.

There was mixed reaction on the part of students about

Denver's competency test. The percent of students not passing and failing to graduate was three to four. Cavanaugh hoped to cut the percentage in half. Denver schools awarded either a diploma if the student passed the test or a certificate of attendance if he failed it.

A Minimal Competency Measurement Conference was conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a project of the Education Commission of the States, and was held in Denver, Colorado in March 1976. Brickell, Director of Policy Studies in Education, New York, a Division of the Academy for Educational Development delivered his address on "Seven Key Notes on Minimal Competency Testing." The Key Notes were:

1. What competencies will you require? [Brickell thought that we need to distinguish between school skills and life skills which were needed after high school graduation.]
2. How will you measure them? [He posed several theoretical solutions worth considering such as: actual performance on the job to be tested while in school, simulated performance situations, school products and performance, and paper and pencil classroom tests.]
3. When will you measure them?
4. How many minimums will you set?
5. How high will you set the minimum?
6. Will they be for schools or for students?
7. What will you do about the incompetent?[13]

In 1973, the State Department of Education in Oregon reviewed high school graduation requirements when citizens of that state indicated in a poll that the diploma was meaningless.[14] Oregon, as a result, instigated a rigid competency certification program. The push for nationwide minimum competencies clearly

demonstrates that citizens still control school curriculum. For several years the Armed Services has sponsored a type of applied performance test known as the General Educational Development (GED).[15] This test has been in existence since World War II and has been taken by older youth as well as adults.

During the 1975-76 school year the State of California began administering "High School Proficiency Examinations" to interested students ages sixteen and above. If the examination was passed, the student was eligible for a regular high school diploma.[16] Since the early 1970's there has been an expressed concern across the nation regarding what students should be able to do in reading as a result of their education. The major thrust of concern has emerged from parent groups, school boards, and state legislators.

McDonald stated that it did not matter what reading teachers thought, minimum competencies were upon us.[17] Students were being tested and the quality of instruction being judged.

McDonald further reported that the emphasis should be on reading literacy rather than minimal competency. The ultimate goal of all reading programs, he said, should be to produce reading literacy for all students in every school system in this country.

McDonald stated,

> The term reading literacy means the ability to solve reasonable simulation of simple 'real world problems'

> involving words and their meanings, getting comprehension from print, using study aids effectively, developing reading flexibility and speed, and using reading as a pleasurable means to grow as a person.[18]

McDonald helped to establish reading mastery levels kindergarten through twelve in Phoenix. The results of three graduating classes have been successful. Students knew they had to master reading skills to graduate, and they achieved their goal.[19]

In recent years newspapers have carried headlines regarding students who have sued school systems because they graduated without proper acquaintance with the basic skills. The growing number of functional illiterates in America is alarming.[20]

Minimum competency testing was initiated at the high school level, but educators realized that students were being punished and penalized; therefore, instead of depriving them of their diploma, testing has been changed to lower grade levels in order to remediate for weaknesses.

Some states are now requiring elementary school students to pass designated tests prior to promotion. The State of Florida administers tests in mathematics and reading in grades three, five, eight and eleven and does not allow social promotion. The use of tests for grade promotion is also a current practice in California. The following fourteen states test for minimum competencies before grade seven. They include Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma,

Rhode Island and Tennessee.[21] Some additional states have options about when testing should begin.

The effect of competency testing is being felt by more elementary schools nationwide. Twenty-six schools in Washington, D.C. are testing a competency based curriculum. By eliminating grade levels the schools in Chicago have been able to handle the promotion problem. A student can move from primary to intermediate to upper grade level by passing a minimum competency test.[22]

The minimum competency tests administered in New York State in 1976 were criticized for being too easy. As a result, beginning June 1981 only students who pass new revised tests in reading, writing, and mathematics will be issued a high school diploma.[23]

A task force was sent to Florida by the National Education Association to study the testing situation there and to make a critical report. One conclusion of the NEA Committee was that students who had experienced several years of substandard teaching and learning could not pass the test. A second conclusion was that teachers would be judged on poor test scores made by students taking the test.[24]

Representative Ron Mottl, a Democrat from Ohio, was on the other side of the issue. He pushed for legislation from the federal government to establish national competency standards.[25]

The following advantages were seen by advocates of minimum competency testing.

1. Schools will define more precisely what students are expected to learn.

2. Grade promotion will come only when students have mastered certain expected skills.

3. Special help will be given to those students at the bottom who need it most.

4. When a student receives his high school diploma, it will indicate that he has certain skills.[26]

Opponents of competency testing made the following predictions:

> 1. The curriculum will become too narrow. Teachers will 'teach to the test' and ignore other important areas of knowledge and development.
> 2. Students who do not do well in school now will be further punished by not being given diplomas or by not being promoted.
> 3. There is no guarantee that students who fail the test will be given remediation.
> 4. The minimum will become the maximum.[27]

Once students have passed the test successfully they will stop trying.

The first state to adopt minimum competency requirements was Oregon. Oregon has probably done more to involve local schools than any other state. The number of competencies tested in Portland, Oregon was cut from 143 to 34. Competencies differed from city to rural "Life Skills" expected of students.[28]

Different directions have been taken in the state of Florida. In reading and mathematics the same test is being used statewide. Florida school officials have been fiercely

attacked because of test results. Time magazine has labeled Florida testing as a scandal for schools. Too many minority students failed the test.[29]

In 1977-78 students in Florida took tests in mastery of basic skills and satisfactory performance in functional literacy. The tests had been developed by the Department of Education. Students in grades three, five, eight and eleven took tests on basic skills while students in grade eleven only were administered tests on functional literacy. If students failed the latter test it was readministered in the senior year. Students who failed then were not issued a high school diploma.[30]

On October 16, 1978 a Civil Action suit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida Tampa Division. Plaintiffs in the suit were black students who had failed the competency test in Florida. Defendants included the State Commissioner of Education, Florida State Board of Education, Governor Reuben Askew, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Comptroller, Treasurer, Commissioner of Agriculture, Florida Department of Education, School Board of Hillsborough County, Florida and Superintendent of Schools of Hillsborough County.[31]

Students who failed the Florida Functional Literacy Examination were placed in remedial programs. If they did not pass subsequent tests, they failed to receive a high school diploma. The lawsuit alleged that permanent harmful effects would result in the lives of the plaintiffs if they were denied

a high school diploma. The plaintiffs stated that the test discriminated against blacks in Florida.

Competency testing raises the potential issue of discrimination. In Florida and in Texas there are many Spanish speaking students. Since the test has not been written in any language except English, it would be considered culturally biased.

McClung stated that a competency test measuring life skills and used as a basis for denying a high school diploma where such skills were never taught violated due process of law. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare requires systems to take affirmative steps to remedy situations which would discriminate against groups of students as stated above.[32]

The American School Board Journal reported a bill that was introduced during the fall of 1977 in the House of Representatives and discussed at length in the Carter Administration. Joseph Califano, Jr., Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare reported that he was absolutely against any federal government intervention in schools. He further stated that the federal government would support but not direct efforts at the local level.[33]

In April 1976 the State Department of Education in the state of Missouri formed eighteen committees to begin work on writing a competency test. This came about as a result of students in that state who were found to be lacking in the basic skills. Eleven regional conferences were held in 1976

in Missouri to explain the results of committee work. The final product was the Basic Essential Skills Test. There were three subtests with thirteen objectives and three items for each with a total of thirty-nine questions. There were eight locally administered objectives in reading/language arts and two in mathematics.[34]

The pilot test on the BEST was administered during the spring of 1978 in several school systems across Missouri. The criteria for passing was that a student must pass one of three items on each objective and obtain a total score of seventy-five percent right. He must have a satisfactory rating on ten local objectives. For mastery a student must have two out of three correct on each objective.[35]

The 1978 Missouri BEST pilot results were as follows:

> Reading/Language Arts 70.6% of eighth grade students mastered all state objectives and 89.2% passed the test. In Mathematics 44.7% mastered and 67.4% passed the test. In Government/Economics 52.8% mastered and 74% passed.[36]

Missouri Schools summarized results of 1979 Basic Essential Skills Test as follows:

> Reading/Language Arts 70.3% mastered; 89.1% passed.
> Mathematics 51.6% mastered; 72.8% passed.
> Government/Economics 54.8% mastered; 77.5% passed.[37]

The Missouri State Teachers Association staff members in commenting on legislative issues reported on House Bill 835 which would provide a comprehensive plan of testing in grades

one through eight under Department of Elementary and Secondary Education remedial programs. A student would have to pass the Basic Essential Skills Test to receive a high school diploma. Every grade would give an annual report to be released to news media. The Missouri State Teachers Association was concerned about what would happen to Title I if that bill passed.[38]

The same article reported that House Bill 22 required Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to construct a Basic Essential Skills Test for eleventh grade students for the 1979-80 school year. They would be given three chances to pass with a minimum score of seventy percent or not receive a high school diploma. A third bill would require that all college or university students receiving a B.S. degree in education would have to pass a minimum competency test before being issued a teaching certificate.[39]

In a telephone conversation with Charles Foster, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Missouri's State Department of Education, the writer was informed that the above mentioned bills were assigned to a sub-committee on testing. That committee had been heard. There were witnesses both pro and con. Foster's thinking on the bill pertaining to teachers was that if a competency test were to be given, it should be administered during the student's freshman year in college and used as a screening device for a candidate desiring to enter the teaching field. According to Foster, it was too late in that session of the State Legislature for the bills to go to both the

House of Representatives and the Senate and be passed.[40]

In July the writer received a letter from Foster stating that the bills did not come out of committee before the close of the 1979 State Legislature.[41]

Elsewhere around the nation, the Richmond Public Schools moved ahead of Virginia's legislation on competency testing to make literacy a requirement for a high school diploma effective in 1978. When the first test was administered during the 1976-77 school year twenty-seven percent of the students failed "survival skills" questions on such items as voter registration forms, employment applications, newspaper articles, and use of the dictionary.[42] Paragraphs were written and oral directions were given. Students not passing were given remediation, and the failing rate was trimmed to six percent. College seniors from nearby institutions helped to tutor high school students, and the success was phenomenal.

An experimental edition of New York State's Basic Competency Tests in mathematics and reading was administered to ninth grade students in White Plains Public Schools in 1976. A large number of pupils failed both tests. A special teacher worked with the students during their sophomore year giving remediation activities. As a result, ninety percent pass rates occurred in reading and seventy-five percent in mathematics.[43]

Good sources on competency testing include principals of schools that have tried it and also commercial publishers such as:

1. The American College Testing program Iowa City, Iowa
2. California Test Bureau/McGraw-Hill
3. Educational Testing Service
4. The Psychological Corporation
5. Cal Press, Inc.
6. Beckman-Beal Mathematical Competencies Test[44]

Other sources are the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the Education Commission of the States.[45]

Schools that have gone to competency testing offer much advice, but perhaps some of the more important items to consider are the following:

1. Do not tie grade promotion to competency tests. Do tie required remedial courses to low competency test scores. Take advantage of making contact with students and helping them to correct deficiencies.
2. If competencies are attached to the diploma, students are motivated. They have a goal to work toward, and both teachers and students form a partnership to assist pupils in reaching that goal.[46]

Six states indicated that passing a competency test was required for high school graduation. Both Florida and California were included in the six states.[47]

The grade levels tested varied among states from one to as many as six different grades. In the state of Missouri testing was done at the eighth grade level initially.[48] Remediation was required of students failing the test in fourteen states. The state of Missouri did not require any remediation. The year the test was/will be implemented by the state varied from Michigan 1970 to New Hampshire and Pennsylvania

1981.[49] A total of eighteen states had additional competency requirements.

Berea High School in Ohio implemented and administered an Adult Performance Level Test for all eleventh grade students during the 1977-78 academic year. Ninety percent of the students passed. During the 1978-79 school year remedial work was given to the ten percent who did not pass with a 100 percent pass set as the goal for all seniors by the spring of 1979.[50]

Kern Union High School District in Bakersville, California involved the community in construction of a competency instrument. Supervisors of 300 jobs helped to write items for the proficiency test. The test identified high school juniors and seniors with weaknesses in reading and mathematics. As a result, remedial programs were established. In 1977 only eight students from a combined total of 3,000 in the eleven high schools did not graduate.[51]

Westside High School in Omaha, Nebraska required students to pass in seven competency areas. In the following three competency areas school officials were well-pleased; consumer mathematics and reading requirements. In 1977 Westside High School graduated 765 students and denied diplomas to eight. The 1978 results were not reported.[52]

In August 1978 South Carolina's Governor James Edwards signed legislation directing the State Board of Education to identify basic skills objectives in mathematics, reading and

writing for students kindergarten through grade twelve by the end of the year. A statewide basic skills test was to be administered to all first, second, third, sixth, and eighth graders at the end of 1980-81 school year, and a test of adult functional literacy to all eleventh grade students at the end of 1981-82 school year. Separate standards and separate testing programs would be developed by the Board of Education for handicapped students as determined by each student's Individual Education Program (IEP) under Public Law 94-142.[53]

In the survey of literature, the writer located pilot test results on a competency test administered to eighth grade students of only one other state. In 1978 Tennessee reported its pilot test results which were much lower than scores made by Missouri's youth.[54] However, without having access to Tennessee's Competency Test and comparing the level of difficulty with Missouri's Basic Essential Skills Test, it would be unfair to judge the ability of eighth graders in Tennessee in comparison with their peers in Missouri.

On August 31, 1978 Governor Jim Thompson of Illinois signed legislation requiring the State Department of Education to prepare procedures and materials by December 15 to assist in developing a minimum competency testing program for that state.[55]

In New York the State Board of Regents adopted statewide criteria for high school graduation. The new requirements would be the toughest in the nation. They were to become

effective June 1981. The Board of Regents in New York also recommended minimum competency testing for teachers. The National Education Association furiously opposed the idea; however, the American Federation of Teachers was receptive to the notion of testing teachers.[56]

Beginning in September 1979 the school districts in Massachusetts were to begin testing students in basic skills. The test results, however, were not to be tied to promotion or graduation.

Educators were divided on the issue of Competency Testing. Decker related that as a result of a major concern that high school students must be competent in the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, Missouri State Government and State Department of Education had enacted a competency testing program for students of that state. Decker stated that teachers in Missouri had become concerned about students graduating from high school lacking in the basic skills. He further stated that some teachers wanted to restore meaning to the high school diploma. Decker stated that many educational leaders thought that the competency of teachers should also be measured.[57]

Decker thought that a test should be given in each basic area at the end of third and sixth grades with remediation, again in junior high with retention in grade if the student failed. Also the test should be given again at the end of the sophomore year. If a student performed poorly he should not

be passed. Remediation would again be administered. The final test would be given at the end of the senior year. If the student did not do well, he would not receive a high school diploma.

Decker indicated that teacher training institutions should be responsible for the competency of teachers. He suggested that a series of tests be given at various times while the student was enrolled in teacher training to ascertain his competencies. He also stated that the competency of professors had a direct bearing on the competency of teachers.[58]

Tierney who taught reading and conducted research at the University of Arizona at Tucson was against competency testing. He stated that two key factors, namely retention and testing, were involved. The premise for retention was that it improved basic skills, but Tierney cited several authorities in the field from 1936 to 1977 who had found little evidence to support the idea. He did, however, find extensive evidence to support the opposite point of view that nonpromoted students failed to progress as much as those who were promoted.[59]

Tierney stated that behind the issue of testing was the notion that basic skills tests would make schools more responsive to parents and taxpayers. He found some major problems with that notion. They were that testing should improve accountability. Testing focuses on minimums rather than maximums. Testing assumes that minimums are known and that all students should acquire the same skills in the same time limit

and by the same methods.[60]

Tierney concluded by stating that there was no way a student's performance on tests could be considered a sufficient measure of his success or competence. "This fallacy contradicts what educators know about tests, students and learning," Tierney emphasized.[61]

Baratz stated that everyone was trying to jump on the bandwagon on the competency testing movement but that no new problems would be revealed by the test results. In the decade of the seventies the trend has been "Back to Basics." Baratz believed that competency tests were a fad which too would pass as did performance contracting and management by objectives.[62]

Baratz concluded that the public needed to be sold on the idea of "what is right with our schools".[63] She reported that in Maryland the National Education Association singing commercials were promoting that concept.

The Board of Directors of the International Reading Association at the twenty-fourth Annual Convention held in Atlanta in April 1979 took the following position on minimum competencies;

> No single measure or method of assessment of minimum competencies should ever be the sole criterion for graduation or promotion of a student. Multiple indices assessed, through a variety of means, including teacher observations, student work samples, past academic performance and student self-reports, should be employed to assess competence.

> Furthermore every effort should be made through every possible means to remediate weaknesses diagnosed through tests. Retention in grade or non-promotion of a student should be considered as only one alternative means of remediation and one that should be considered only when all available methods have failed.
>
> For these reasons, the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association is firmly opposed to the efforts of any school, state, provincial, or national agency which attempts to determine a student's graduation or promotion on the basis of any single assessment.[64]

The National Education Association in Resolution 78-54 took the following position on mandated standards for educational programs; "The NEA believes that any state-mandated standards should set no more than broad, general curricular guidelines and should not be based on student achievement."[65]

The National Academy of Education's Committee on Testing and Basic Skills reported its position "that any setting of statewide minimum competency standards for awarding the high school diploma is basically unworkable, exceeds the present measurement arts of the teaching profession, and will create more social problems than it can conceivably solve."[66]

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Board opposed statewide tests for graduation, but favored competency-based education. That action was approved by the Annual Conference in Detroit in March 1979. The statement reads, "States should not require that students earn a given score on a statewide test in order to be promoted or

graduated."[67]

At the Seventh Plains Regional International Reading Association Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota Donald C. Cushenbery, professor of Reading, University of Nebraska at Omaha informed the writer that Westside High School in Omaha was phasing out its competency testing program. Cushenbery further stated that many other high schools were also giving up competency testing of students.[68]

Cushenbery also reported that the federal courts in Florida had postponed until 1981 mandatory passing of a competency test as a graduation requirement. Cushenbery believed that competency testing would not long endure in the United States.

The writer believes if we are going to test, our objectives should be written first and then material taught covering each one. Testing should begin in lower grades to prepare students to pass. To wait until boys and girls are juniors or seniors in high school is too late. All students are not capable of passing the same test. Each student is different. By the time they are high school seniors there is a twelve grade ability span among the students.

The writer recommends that since several educational organizations previously mentioned in this paper have gone on record in opposition to mandatory passing of a competency test for grade promotion or for receiving a high school diploma, no student should suffer the humiliation of non-promotion or

not graduating because he failed to pass a competency test.

In conclusion, the writer believes that restoring the prestige to a high school diploma does not seem too unreasonable if we had a perfect society of all average and above average students which has never existed. The writer would agree on testing students to determine strengths and weaknesses and then to remediate, reteach and retest. Under no circumstances, however, would he suggest mandatory passing of a competency test for all students as a requirement for grade promotion or receiving a high school diploma.

Notes

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[3] The Practitioner.

[4] Dorothy Levenson, "Minimum Competency Testing," Instructor, Jan. 1979, p. 83.

[5] Chris Pipho, "Competency Testing: A Response to Arthur Wise," Educational Leadership, May 1979, p. 551.

[6] Pipho

[7] Owen B. Keerman, Competency Tests and Graduation Requirements, ASCD, 1976.

[8] Keerman, p. 3.

[9] Keerman, p. 4.

[10] Keerman, p. v.

[11] Keerman, p. 1.

[12] Jerry Cavanaugh, Parade, 12 June 1977.

[13] Henry M. Brickell, "Seven Key Notes on Minimal Competency Testing," Educational Leadership, Apr. 1978, p. 551.

[14] The Practitioner.

[15] Keerman, p. 1.

[16] Keerman.

[17] Thomas F. McDonald, "Pro: Minimal Competency Testing as Viewed from the Front Line," Journal of Reading, Vol. 22, 1, Oct. 1978, p. 13.

[18] McDonald, p. 14.

[19] McDonald, p. 15.

[20] Levenson, p. 83.

[21] Levenson.

[22] Levenson.

[23] Levenson.

[24] Levenson.

[25] Levenson.

[26] Levenson.

[27] Levenson.

[28] Levenson.

[29] Levenson, p. 84.

[30] Ralph Tyler, "Tyler--NEA Panel Criticizes Florida's Basic Skills Standards, Diploma Tests," News Exchange, Vol. 20, 4, Oct. 1978, published by ASCD, p. 3.

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[32] Merle Steven McClung, "Competency Testing: Potential for Discrimination," Clearinghouse Review, Sept. 1979, pp. 439, 446.

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[34] "Report: Results of the Basic Essential Skills Test--'BEST'," Missouri Schools, Vol. 44, 3, Nov. 1978, pp. 11-13.

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39 "Plain Speaking."

40 Telephone interview with Charles Foster, 18 Apr. 1979.

41 Letter from Charles Foster, 10 July 1979.

42 The Practitioner, p. 4.

43 The Practitioner.

44 The Practitioner, p. 5.

45 The Practitioner, p. 6.

46 The Practitioner, p. 8.

47 The Practitioner, p. 9.

48 The Practitioner, p. 10.

49 The Practitioner.

50 The Practitioner, p. 3.

51 The Practitioner, p. 4.

52 The Practitioner, p. 3.

53 "Minimum Competency Testing," Education Daily, 19 Sept. 1978, pp. 5-6.

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School and Community, Nov. 1976, pp. 20-21.

[58] Decker.

[59] Robert J. Tierney, "Minimal Competency Testing Won't Do It," Journal of Reading, Vol. 22, 1, Oct. 1978, pp. 10-11.

[60] Tierney.

[61] Tierney.

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[63] Baratz.

[64] "A Position on Minimum Competencies in Reading," Adopted by the Board of Directors of IRA, Apr. 1979, The Reading Teacher, Vol. 33, 1, Oct. 1979, pp. 54-55.

[65] "Impact of Minimum Competency Testing in Florida," Today's Education, Sept. - Oct., 1978, p. 31.

[66] "Impact of Minimum Competency Testing in Florida," p. 32.

[67] "ASCD Board Opposes Statewide Tests for Graduation, Favors Competency-Based Education," Educational Leadership, Vol. 36, 8, May 1979, p. 554.

[68] Conversation with Donald C. Cushenbery, 28 Sept. 1979.

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